



## NEWS RELEASE

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## Man Charged with Kidnapping, Sexually Assaulting Lancaster Teen Walking From School

A 41-year-old man has been charged with kidnapping and sexually assaulting a teenage girl walking home from school in Lancaster, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Deputy District Attorney Jon Hatami said Joseph Kenneth Cornett (dob 10/6/73) faces nine felony counts: kidnapping to commit rape; assault with intent to commit a felony, victim under 18; kidnapping; lewd act upon a child; false imprisonment by violence; sexual penetration by foreign object, minor over 14; attempted forcible rape; assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury; and attempted unprotected sexual activity by one who knows self to be infected by HIV.

Case MA065982 also charges Cornett with seven misdemeanor counts of resisting a peace officer and one misdemeanor count of possessing a controlled substance, PCP.

The defendant is scheduled to be arraigned today in Department A01 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Antelope Valley Branch.

Cornett is accused of approaching the 15-year-old victim on May 6, claiming to be a police officer arresting her for jaywalking, the prosecutor said. The defendant then allegedly took the girl to an abandoned mobile classroom near Lancaster Boulevard and 40<sup>th</sup> Street and sexually assaulted her, the prosecutor added.

The teen victim managed to escape and got help from people in a nearby church. The prosecutor says Cornett attempted to flee the scene but his vehicle became stuck in the desert sand and he was soon arrested after fighting with the officers and spitting at them.

The defendant's bail was set at more than \$1.2 million.

If convicted as charged, Cornett faces a possible maximum sentence of life in state prison.

The case is being investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

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### **About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.